

RAINWATER TANKS

Information for Plumbers

This Fact Sheet applies to rainwater tanks that collect **roof water only**. Plumbing work for tanks includes “top up” from the mains supply or where the rainwater is plumbed to the toilet cistern or washing machine. The information below provides a brief outline of the key requirements.

Plumbers should complete all work in accordance with the *NSW Code of Practice Plumbing and Drainage* and follow the specific technical requirements for rainwater tank plumbing that are detailed in *Guidelines for the Installation of Rainwater Tanks on Residential Properties: Part 1 Plumbing requirements*.

1. Application must be made to Sydney Water on the standard **PERMIT APPLICATION – for Plumbing and Drainage Work** at least 2 working days prior to commencement of the work.
2. There must be no direct connection to pipes carrying water from the mains supply.
3. Where approval is given by Sydney Water for top up from the mains supply:
 - ◆ a flow restrictor must be installed to ensure the filling rate is no more than two litres per minute for every house, townhouse or strata unit supplied from the tank.
 - ◆ there must be a visible air gap (external to the rainwater tank) between the inlet pipe from the mains supply and the maximum level of the rainwater in the tank.
4. All tank outlets must be labelled “RAINWATER” on a metallic sign as specified in AS1319.
5. All pipes carrying rainwater must be labelled “RAINWATER”. This can be done using identification tape for below ground pipe (made in accordance with AS2648) or adhesive pipe markers for above ground (made in accordance with AS1345).
6. A backflow prevention device must be installed at the property meter to protect the mains supply. The type of device varies in different situations. The details are as follows:

For above ground rainwater tanks:

20mm and 25mm meters Sydney Water will replace the existing meter free of charge with a new integral dual check valve meter. This will be done either on receipt of the customer’s rebate application form (where eligible) or by calling 13 20 92 to arrange for the meter exchange.

32mm+ meters A dual check valve must be installed adjacent to the meter. Please note that costs associated with this are the responsibility of the property owner.

For below ground rainwater tanks:

A new meter is not required but a testable double check valve must be installed at the meter due to higher risk to mains supply from underground tanks. Costs associated with this are the responsibility of the property owner. The owner must also arrange for a plumber to test the device once a year.

NOTE: In rare instances, Sydney Water may require a higher hazard backflow prevention device.